Assessment Policy: Whole School

St James Senior Girls' School

Contents

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the assessment process within the school is to track individual pupil progress from entry to departure in order to:

a) enable each pupil to expand her understanding, produce the best work of which she is capable, and take increasing responsibility for her own development through the guidance of her teachers;

b) inform parents fully of their daughter's standard of work and progress, and to provide guidance on how further development could take place;

c) inform curriculum planning and teaching, and thereby meet each pupil's needs (including those with SEND/EAL or MA&T) through a thorough knowledge of her current understanding and rate of progress; and

d) enable staff to monitor, review and refine their own practice.

1 Marking

The general principles are as follows:

- marking should be timely and regular (ideally, written work should be corrected before being returned to pupils);
- teachers should make a distinction between summative and formative assessment;
- formative marking should set targets that are measurable and achievable;
- pupils should respond to formative marking by commenting, re-doing the work or by extending the work;
- marking should engage with the detail of what is written; and
- marking should usually be 'comment driven'; marks and grades should be recorded by the teacher but only given where appropriate - research demonstrates that pupils make best progress when they respond to formative comments;

Correcting written work

For written work in all subjects the following abbreviations should be used in the margin:

- sp. = spelling mistake
- P. = punctuation mistake
- // = the place where a new paragraph should have started
- exp. = poor expression

Correcting written work (pupil)

The marking policy of the school aims to acknowledge the importance of accurate spelling/grammar. For spelling mistakes, each word should be correctly written out three times, but not copied (cover/write/check). However, for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, spelling errors should be marked as usual, but no more than six (usually high frequency) words would be selected for correction in any one piece of work. For further information please see the SEND policy.

Grading work

The chosen method of grading and marking work should be the same across a year group within a particular department. The meaning of the grades or numbers used and the criteria by which they are awarded should be clearly explained to pupils. Teachers should keep meticulous records and marking of work should be regularly scrutinised by the Head of Department and moderated across year groups.

Years 7-9

Whilst all departments follow the school marking policy, there may be necessary variations between subjects on how work is graded. However, the following correlation between grades and marks may act as a guideline:

Grade *	Percentage
A	80 - 100
B	70 - 79
C	60 - 69
D	Less than 60

* + and – may be used at the teacher's discretion.

It is essential that written work be presented well, as this will help the pupil to think and communicate clearly. House points should be awarded for excellent presentation, as it should be encouraged as much as possible. A pupil should repeat any work that is below the standard of their best ability.

Years 10-13

At GCSE and A Level, marking is structured according to the requirements of the relevant examination board. Marks tend to be progressive, leading towards the required standard as the course proceeds. The aim is to give pupils an accurate idea of their progress, but not to judge them by such high standards at the beginning of Year 10 or Year 12 that they become discouraged.

2 Tracking

(See Appendix A for yearly timetable - Tracking Pupil Progress and Assessment Procedures)

Baseline assessment

Year 7 pupils (and pupils new to the school in Years 8 and 9) are tested in September using MidYIS; Year 10 pupils are tested in September/October using Yellis. Alis is used to provide predicted grades for students in Year 12 and 13. MidYIS data is not usually shared with parents and pupils. However, the Yellis GCSE chances graphs are given to pupils and their parents at the PTIs in the January of Year 11 and Alis data is shared with parents and pupils in the PTIs following the Year 12 mock exams.

Baseline assessment data is currently used in the following ways:

- to identify more able pupils;
- to identify under-achievers by comparison of baseline assessment data to internal test and exam results;
- to inform setting decisions;
- to provide an ability profile for the particular cohort to inform planning of schemes of work and lessons;
- to help formulate targets for pupils;
- to identify the possible presence of learning difficulties. Further testing would then be needed;
- for reference during pupil reviews, and while writing reports, meeting parents, and monitoring pupil progress; and
- to inform any support and advice given to the pupil re study skills and areas to develop.

Standardised tests

In the Summer Term of each academic year, Years 7-9 take standardised tests in mathematics and English. Year 7 also take the tests early in the Autumn Term to create a baseline. The results of these tests provide a nationally standardised level in mathematics for each pupil and a 'reading age' and nationally standardised level for English. Progress can thus be tracked, year on year, in these key areas and any pupil who is not making satisfactory/expected progress will be 'flagged up' as a concern by the Deputy Head (Academic)/SENDCO/Head of Section. Additional support will then be provided as necessary.

Rolling spreadsheets

Spreadsheets are kept for each Year on an ongoing basis. They record the following information for each pupil:

- SEND/MA&T/EAL information;
- MidYIS/Yellis scores and ranking within the Year group; predicted GCSE grades;
- results of standardised tests in mathematics and English;
- overall averages from each end of term exam session; and
- position within the Year group from each end of term exam session and comparison with MidYIS/Yellis ranking.

Monitoring learning and tracking pupil progress

By referring to department records, examination marks and 'rolling spreadsheets', subject teachers, Heads of Department, Heads of Section, Senior Teachers and the Deputy Head (Academic) should look carefully and regularly at the progress of each individual to see that it is in line with expectations and to make interventions where necessary. 'Rolling spreadsheets' should also be referred to during each session of report-writing.

Monitoring/tracking within the department

Heads of Department should also analyse results for each GCSE/A Level cohort with reference to baseline predictions within their subject and use the value-added figures, calculated from these predictions, to inform their annual self-evaluation, and development planning.

The SchoolBase system enables all staff to have access to individual pupil records such as:

- half term grades;
- exam results with position;
- subject reports; and
- achievements within the subject e.g. prizes at Speech day or winning a competition.

Whole school communication

There are regular meetings between the Headmistress and the SMT, Deputy Head (Academic), Heads of Section, Heads of Departments, form teachers and subject teachers.

3 Target Setting

Target setting - general

In the first lesson of any term following an exam session (i.e. autumn and spring terms), pupils will set targets for each subject, guided by their exam review sheet and their subject report for the previous term. This will be stuck at the front of their exercise book. The subject teacher should keep a copy for reference. Targets will also arise from on-going formative assessment by subject teachers.

Literacy targets for Year 7-9

The English department sets literacy targets for Years 7-9. These are communicated to staff and pupils.

Target setting - Years 11-13

Target grades are formulated for Years 11-13 at the beginning of the Autumn Term in the following way:

- **Year 11**: Yellis predictions plus the school's average value-added score from the previous years' GCSE results.
- **Year 12 and 13**: at least the Alis prediction.

Pupils' progress will be monitored against these grades on an on-going basis, and especially at the mock review meetings in the Spring Term (see 5.1.5).

4 Tests

Regular checks on progress (both formative and summative) are made in all subjects. Subject teachers may find it useful to compare test scores to MidYIS/Yellis/Alis results to determine if a pupil is on track. Any anomalies (especially repeated anomalies) should be reported to the Head of Department and the Head of Section.

5 Examinations

School Examinations

Examinations take place at the end of the Autumn Term (Years 9-10), at the beginning of the

Summer Term (Year 12) and before half term in the Summer Term (Years 7-10). Years 7 and 8 are assessed throughout the Autumn and Spring Terms; departments will schedule their tests at the most appropriate time for their scheme of work. Years 12 and 13 sit EPPs after school as appropriate throughout the year.

Revision

Each pupil is provided with a revision folder in their first term and revision guidance is provided for each subject in the lead up to examination week. The week before exam week is 'study week', when the term or year's work is revised in class with the subject teacher, and this gives pupils the opportunity to ask questions. Homework in study week is given over entirely to revision.

The pupils receive training in revision techniques throughout their school career.

Differentiation in exams

Each department has a slightly different policy on differentiation in exams. Generally speaking, in Years 7 and 8 differentiation in exams is kept to a minimum. This allows movement between sets to be kept as fluid as possible. From Year 9 upwards more differentiation may be needed to provide for the varying levels of attainment.

Review of exam results

Exam results are reviewed by subject teachers, Heads of Department, Heads of Section, the SENDCO and the Deputy Head (Academic) and interventions are made as appropriate.

Return of examination papers to pupils

In the week following exam week, papers are returned to pupils and reviewed in class. Each pupil completes an exam review sheet for each subject. The subject teacher should keep these until the following term, when pupils will use them for target setting.

Mock examinations

Mock examinations for GCSE are taken in January by Year 11. Mocks for A Level are taken before and after half term in February by Year 13. The results of these examinations are communicated to parents at the PTIs.

Following each set of mock examinations, a review meeting is held with all relevant staff to put in place suitable interventions with reference to Yellis/Alis predictions as appropriate.

Any pupil who achieves less than a '4' or 'C' grade may be required to re-take the mock examinations in that subject after the spring half term (for GCSEs) or at the beginning of the Summer Term (for A Level), depending on their Yellis or Alis grades. If the pupil fails to achieve a '4' or 'C' grade in the re-take, a meeting will be convened to discuss her progress and to decide whether or not she should continue with the subject.

Public Examinations

Pupils, with the exception of some 'native speakers' and, rarely, the most able, sit GCSE exams at the end of Year 11 and A Levels at the end of Year 13. Predicted grades are only given to students in Year 13.

6 Reporting

Written reports to parents

Parents are sent written reports on their daughter's progress in one of the following formats:
- grade sheets with/without comments;
- full subject reports (with Form Teacher and Head of Section/Headmistress report).

Attitude to Learning and Attainment Grades

The grading system is as follows:

'Attitude to Learning' grades

Excellent
- Always brings the correct equipment to every lesson and hands all tasks in on time.
- Behaviour is exemplary.
- Contributes answers or asks questions in every lesson and takes an active role in pair and group work.
- Will always look for ways to improve their work such as asking the teacher or doing independent research.

Good
- Brings the correct equipment to lessons and hands the majority of tasks in on time.
- Behaviour is always good.
- Contributes answers or asks questions in most lessons and plays a positive role in pair and group work.
- Will look for ways to improve their work such as asking the teacher or doing independent research.

Variable
- Usually brings the correct equipment to lessons but homework is not always handed in on time.
- Behaviour is generally good but can sometimes lose focus.
- Will sometimes contribute to class discussion but often only when asked and is often passive in pair and group work.
- Can give up when work is difficult and does not ask for help.

Improvement Needed
- Regularly has to be reminded to bring the correct equipment to lessons and/or is often given homework slips for late work.
- Regularly needs direction to stay on task.
- Makes unhelpful contributions to class discussion and/or is distracting for others in pair and group work.
- Is reluctant to attempt/start tasks set, either in class or for homework and does not ask for help.

Attainment grades:

+	Taking account of baseline data and professional judgement, this pupil is achieving **above** their expected level.
=	Taking account of baseline data and professional judgement, this pupil is **achieving** their expected level.
-	Taking account of baseline data and professional judgement, this pupil is achieving **below** their expected level.

Half-termly grades - Years 11 and 13

Each teacher will formulate two grades for each pupil at half term and end of term (Autumn and Spring Terms), one indicating the level at which the pupil is currently working (in relation to GCSE or A Level standards) and another indicating a 'projected' final grade based on her current rate of progress. These grades will be based on marks from tests, past paper practice and other written tasks.

Guidance on report writing

Reports should be positive, but an honest appraisal of the pupil's progress.

The format should be that of a 'positive sandwich':

- Top layer: praise and progress
- Middle layer: the present area of weakness and the next step to overcome that area
- Bottom layer: praise

Reports should contain 2-3 targets for each pupil, even if their attainment is very good.

It is useful for parents to know if the exam mark is an accurate reflection of their daughter's ability. Previous reports should be consulted by the subject teacher, so that any changes (particularly positive ones) can be stated.

Reports must be checked carefully for errors.

Parent-teacher interviews

Parents will be invited to at least one parents' evening during the year to discuss their daughter's progress with the subject staff, the form teacher and the SENDCO (where appropriate). From Year 9 onwards, pupils are also expected to attend these interviews.

Signed by:	
	Hugh Venables **Chair of Governors**
Date of adoption of this policy	September 2021
Date of last review of this policy	Summer Term 2021
Date for next review of this policy	Summer Term 2022
Policy owner (SMT)/other	Deputy Head (Academic)

Appendix A - Tracking Pupil Progress and Assessment Procedures

MONTH	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORTED TO
August	• Publication of GCSE and A Level results • Collation of pupil data onto 'rolling spreadsheets. • Updating/adding new girls to SEND register	Exams Officer DH(A)/Senior Teacher SENDCO	Headmistress/ all staff
September	• Departmental self-review: part 1 (analysis of public exam results and quality of learning, achievement and progress.) HoDs to meet with DH(A) or Headmistress subsequently.	HoDs	DH(A)/ Headmistress
	• Year 7-9 Literacy Targets set and communicated.	HoD English	All staff and pupils
	• Discussion of concerns arising from reports. • Review Day. • Staff to set formative targets for pupils.	HoS & DH(A)/ Headmistress/DH(P) Form Teachers/SENDCO Subject teachers	All staff All staff HoDs
	• Formulation of 'target grades' for Years 11 and 13.	DH(A)/HoS/HoDs	All staff
October	• Baseline data collection: Year 7 MidYIS/standardised tests/Year 10 YELLIS • Results to be added to 'rolling spreadsheets. • Publication of value-added data for GCSE and A-level. • Review of half term reports (Year 11&13).	DH(A)/English and mathematics departments DH(A)/Senior Teacher DH(A) DH(A)/HoS	All staff
December	Pupils' self-evaluation using exam review sheets.	Subject teachers	HoDs
pre-term January	Departmental self-review: part 2.	HoDs	DH(A)/ Headmistress
January	• Discussion of concerns arising from reports. • Review day (expect Year 11). • Staff to set formative targets for pupils. • GCSE mock results review. Progress to be considered with reference to baseline data.	Headmistress/DH(A)/DH (P)/HoS Form teachers Subject teachers Year 11 teachers/SENDCO/ HoS/DH(A) and Headmistress	All staff All staff HoDs Pupils/Parents

February	• A Level mock results review with reference to baseline data. • Head of Lower School/DH(A), DH(P) and SENDCO to meet with Year 6 teacher.	Year 13 teachers, Head of 6th Form, SENDCO, DH(A) and Headmistress Head of Lower School/ DH(A)/SENDCO/DH(P)	Pupils/Parents HoDs/Year 7 subject teachers
April	• Review of departmental development plans and formulation of new development plans.	HoDs	DH(A)/ Headmistress/ Governors
June	• Pupils' self-evaluation using exam review sheets.	Subject teachers	HoDs
July	• Updating of MA&T list, based on MidYIS and exam results. • Updating of SEND/EAL registers. • Review of internal exam results	Senior Teacher SENDCO/HoS/DH(A) HoS/DH(A)/SENDCO	All staff Headmistress/all staff Headmistress